THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) to (d) No, Sir. In February, 2004, the Ministry has declared 7457 Kms. of State Roads as National Highways. At present emphasis is being given for development of roads already declared as National Highways instead of declaring more roads as National Highways. The State Government has been informed accordingly.

Target for construction of roads

1234. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) and the Border Road Development Board (BRDB) could not meet Government's target for 2004-05 for construction of National Highways, bridges and bypasses;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether Government would revise its target to mitigate the shortfall?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) and (b) In respect of National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), 2896 km. of National Highways were targeted to be 4-laned in the year 2004-05 of which 2349 km. have been 4-laned.

In respect of Border Road Development Board (BRDB), the details of targets assigned for the year 2004-05 and achievements thereof are enclosed as Statement. (*See* below).

The shortfall is due to problems associated with land acquisition/ preconstructions activities, poor performance of contractors, ROB clearances, environment and forest clearances, non availability Grade-B (IS:2062) steel for bridge superstructure, early onset of monsoon, flash floods resulting in road communications being cutoff etc.

(c) The targets have not been revised. The Government is concerned with the shortfalls and following steps are being taken to make up the shortfalls during the coming year;

(i) Regular monitoring of financial and physical performance of works at the highest levels.
(ii) Timely award of contracts.
(iii) Discouraging the practice of granting time extensions to contractors.
(iv) Award of bonus to contractors for completing works before the target date of completion.
(v) Not to sanction any new construction work until Land Acquisition is completed.
(vi) The problems relating to Land Acquisition have been simplified by making amendments to NH Act.
(vii) Ministry insists on Schedule of Rates being updated regularly.
(viii) The works sanctioned by the Ministry are cancelled if these are not started within the stipulated time.

Statement

Details of targets for construction of National Highways, bridges, bypasses and achievement thereof

Sl.No.	Descriptions of items	Unit	Target	Achievement
1.	Improvement to low grade section	km.	13.42	21.77
2.	Widening single lane to two lane	km.	155.92	183.28
3.	Strengthening weak pavement	Km.	4.17	4.17
4.	Construction of major bridges	Nos.	15	12
5.	Construction of minor bridge	Nos.	15	5
6.	Improvement in riding quality	km.	155.97	167.59

Connecting Eastern Coast with Western Coast

†1235. PROF. R.B.S. VARMA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are going to formulate a scheme for connecting Eastern Coast with Western Coast of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the amount likely to be spent by Government for implementation of the said scheme?

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.